Report of the Medical Officer of Health

OF THE

Borough of Shaftesbury.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Shaftesbury.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my report for the year ending December 31st, 1921.

The area of the Borough has been increased since November last, but until then was 156 acres, and the population is at the end of the year estimated as 1877.

The Borough stands on a rocky cliff, high above the surrounding country, some 700 ft. above sea level, the descent being somewhat precipitous to the north-west, west and south-west, but more gradual in other directions. There is no river or stream in the Borough.

The Water Supply is obtained from a spring, and pumped up to a reservoir. The water has been analysed and is of excellent quality, contamination being almost impossible. It is supplied from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., the lower parts of the town having a constant supply as a rule, but during the extremely dry summer of this year a shortage of water was experienced.

The Drainage is on the irregation system, the sewage being carried to a septic tank below the Borough, but included in the added area. A new sewer has been built, and several closets that were formerly hand-flushed are now connected to it, and also pail closets and privy pits.

Scavenging is done by contract, the refuse being placed in movable receptacles in the street in the morning once a week, and removed in the contractor's cart to the old quarry, and burnt periodically.

Inspections.—Thirty-five inspections have been made, and three formal notices served in respect of defects found, and also eleven informal notices, all of which have been complied with.

Town Planning Act.—Sixteen new houses have been erected, twelve being in the old area and four in the added area. There are two back-to-back houses in Victoria Street, which I hope to see improved at an early date. Concerning the Dairies or Cowsheds and Slaughter-houses now included in the Borough, I hope to make a report at a later date.

Infectious Disease.—Two cases of diphtheria were reported in January; they were probably imported; and two other cases occurred in October.

Births.—Twenty-five births in the Borough were registered, all legitimate; of these, eight were males. The birth rate is therefore 13·31 per 1,000. The average number of births for preceding five years being 26·3.

Deaths.—Twenty-four deaths of persons belonging to the Borough were registered during the year, nine being males and fifteen females; one death under one year being attributed to congenital debility, premature birth. One male and three females died of cancer, two males of heart disease, and two of arterial degeneration, and one female. One female died of tuberculosis of the lungs, one of influenza, and one of diabetes. The average death rate is 12·78 per 1,000, the average for the last five years being 15·9 per 1,000.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. F. S. BLUCKE,

Medical Officer of Health.